

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION'S

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

**OPERATING PLAN for
AFRICAN-AMERICAN EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM
2007-2008**

Working Together to Save Lives



African-American Employment Operating Plan FY 2007- FY 2008

Federal agencies are being challenged to lead our Nation into the 21st Century by building a highly skilled and well-trained Federal workforce that looks like America. NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS) is committed to building a talented workforce that utilizes the skills of all employees and is representative of the nation's diversity.

More and more, NWS finds itself competing with private industry to attract skilled employees to fulfill its mission of providing weather, water, and climate forecasts and warnings for the United States, its territories, adjacent waters, and ocean areas for the protection of life and property and the enhancement of the national economy. By tapping the talents of our increasingly diverse communities, NWS is building a stronger foundation for itself and the world.

One of the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity Management's (OEODM) highest priorities has been to undertake a serious effort to strengthen the NWS workforce and management capabilities while addressing workforce diversity issues. The Assistant Administrator for Weather Services issued the NWS Policy on Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Diversity Management. In this policy statement, he directed the NWS to build and manage a talented and diverse workforce. Under this policy, NWS managers have an opportunity and responsibility to address the long-standing underrepresentation and underutilization of African-American in its workforce, especially in senior management, hydrology, meteorology, engineering, and physical science positions.

The African-American Special Emphasis Program has been established to increase the awareness and representation of African-Americans throughout the NWS. Executive Order 11478, which establishes EEO Program, helps to strengthen this program. It is the policy of the Federal government to provide equal opportunity in employment to all individuals regardless of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or age. Although African-Americans are well represented in the NWS workforce, they are underrepresented in higher-grade positions.

This African-American Employment Program Operating Plan (AAEPOP) is tied to the overall NWS Policy on EEO and Diversity Management. The Diversity Management Operating Plan and the AAEPOP will be institutionalized in all facets of NWS operations. The plan calls for strengthening NWS outreach activities in a comprehensive effort to promote partnership opportunities with the African-American community in three critical areas: employment, training and education.

This plan has been developed to address and assist in reversing the under representation and under utilization of African-Americans at the NWS. The plan seeks to recruit talented candidates from outside the NWS; retain, promote, develop current employees; and create a pipeline for addressing current and future workforce needs.

FY 2007-2008 Goals

Goal	Lead Office	Completion
Develop African-American Employment Program web page and announce completion to NWS family.	OEODM	Quarter III - FY2007
Contact regions and discuss African-American Employment Program Operating Plan.	OEODM	Quarter III - FY2007
Establish the African-American Employment Program Committee.	OEODM	Quarter IV - FY2007
Initiate dialogue to establish long-term relationships with African-American advocacy groups.	OEODM	Quarter I - FY2007
Initiate dialogue to establish long-term relationships with African-American professional organizations, colleges and universities.	OEODM	Quarter II - FY2007
Create awareness among local African-American high school students about NWS Intern Programs (i.e. METCON).	OEODM	Quarter I - FY2007
Identify and assess utilization of current entry-level intern programs to develop diverse groups of professional, administrative, and scientific trainees.	OEODM	Quarter III - FY2007
Identify African-American college students interested in hydrology, meteorology, engineering and physical science at the NWS.	OEODM	Quarter IV - FY2007
Create/monitor African-American informal mentoring program for employees in all occupations.	OEODM	Quarter IV - FY2007
Review GS-13, 14, 15, and SES search and placement procedures and ensure effective outreach tools are utilized to actively recruit qualified African-American candidates for senior-level positions.	OEODM - WFMO	Quarter II - FY2007
Visit regions and monitor African-American Employment Programs.	OEODM	Quarter IV - FY2007

Goal A: Enhance/Develop Employee Potential

1. Develop African-American Employment Program web page and announce completion to NWS family.

Lead Office: OEODM

Completion: Review current web page and update to reflect goals of AAEPPOP by end of Quarter III - FY2007.

2. Ensure that the requirements in vacancy announcements and the language in ranking factors are not restrictive or biased in nature; areas of consideration are broadened, where possible and review “status only” requirement.

Lead Office: Workforce Management Office (WFMO) and OEODM

Completion: Review vacancy announcement language and procedures by end of Quarter III - FY2007.

3. Contact regions and discuss African-American Employment Program Operating Plan.

Lead Office: OEODM

Completion: Receive input on how each region will implement plan to fit their needs by end of Quarter III - FY2007.

4. Establish the African-American Employment Program Committee.

Lead Office: OEODM

Completion: Request volunteers for the committee, get supervisor approval, select committee members, and select a Chair by end of Quarter IV - FY2007

5. Initiate dialogue to establish long-term relationships with African-American advocacy groups and organizations.

Lead Office: OEODM

Completion: Initiate dialogue with African-American organizations by end of Quarter I - FY2007.

6. Identify and target institutions that graduate a significant number of African-Americans with degrees that meet NWS job needs. Partner with these institutions to identify students interested in the NWS.

Lead Office: OEODM

Completion: Develop list of viable candidates by end of Quarter I - FY2007.

7. Research NWS recruitment strategies used to target African-Americans through professional organizations, colleges, and universities.

Lead Office: OEODM

Completion: Create an African-American employment communications plan and initiate dialogue with African-American publications and organizations by end of Quarter IV - FY2007.

8. Identify existing High School Intern Programs that prepare students for jobs and careers in the NWS and create awareness of these programs among local school systems.

Lead Office: OEODM in coordination with local school districts

Completion: Develop partnerships with local school systems and secure their participation in existing NWS internship/apprenticeship programs by end of Quarter III - FY2007.

9. Identify and assess utilization of current entry-level intern programs to develop diverse groups of professional, administrative, and scientific trainees.

Lead Office: OEODM

Completion: Review and assess intern programs statistical data by end of Quarter III - FY2007.

10. Establish informal mentoring program for interested African-American employees.

Lead Office: OEODM

Completion: Identify mentors and mentorees by end of Quarter IV - FY2007

11. Review GS-13, 14, 15, and SES search and placement procedures and ensure effective outreach tools are utilized to actively recruit qualified African-American candidates for senior-level positions.

Lead Office: WFMO and OEODM

Completion: Make recommendations to WFMO, directors and managers for correcting any deficiencies by end of Quarter IV - FY2007.

12. Ensure that EEO Managers report their participation on NWS administered Selection Review Boards and SES Selection Panels.

Lead Office: OEODM

Completion: Review procedures on boards and selection panels and make suggestions to correct any deficiencies by end of Quarter IV - FY2007.

13. Create awareness among NWS recruitment personnel about the wide variety of African-American recruitment sources that can yield potential GS-13, 14, 15, and SES applicants.

Lead Office: OEODM and WFMO

Completion: Initiate dialogue for ensuring a pool of qualified applicants, with African-American executive-level organizations by end of Quarter IV - FY2007.

14. Create awareness among high-potential NWS African-American employees of GS-13, 14, 15, and SES opportunities.

Lead Office: OEODM and WFMO

Completion: Create an SES awareness campaign by end of Quarter IV- FY2007.

15. Create awareness among NWS African-American employees of existing executive/leadership training programs.

Lead Office: WFMO and OEODM

Completion: Review African-American participation data for leadership and executive training programs by end of Quarter I - FY2007.

16. Identify and promote awareness of government-wide and NWS executive development training programs among high-potential African-American candidates in order to increase opportunities for inclusion in GS-13, 14, 15 and SES selection pools.

Lead Office: OEODM and WFMO

Completion: Create an awareness campaign by end of Quarter III - FY2007.

Goal B: Improve Retention

1. Review exit interview procedures, questionnaires, and data for African-American employees and make recommendations for improvement.

Lead Office: WFMO and OEODM

Completion: Review existing procedures, questionnaires, and data continuously.

2. Review internal employment practices undertaken to retain African-American employees (e.g., use of retention bonuses, awards, promotions, etc.).

Lead Office: WFMO and OEODM

Completion: Review retention data and make suggestions to correct any deficiencies by end of Quarter I - FY2007.

Goal C: Disseminate Accurate and Compelling Information about Training and Development Opportunities.

1. Review NWS African-American employee participation in existing skill-building training programs, conferences, and seminars.

Lead Office: WFMO and OEODM

Completion: Review African-American participation data for training program by end of Quarter IV - FY2007.

2. Promote awareness among NWS African-American employees of opportunities to compete for managerial, executive and upward mobility training.

Lead Office: WFMO and OEODM

Completion: Review procedures for advertising and notifying employees about opportunities and make suggestions to correct any deficiencies by end of Quarter III - FY2007.

3. Review NWS nomination process among African-American and other employees (GS-6 through GS-13) for participation in leadership, and executive potential programs and other developmental programs.

Lead Office: WFMO and OEODM

Completion: Review procedures for advertising and notifying employees about opportunities and make suggestions to correct any deficiencies by end of Quarter IV - FY2007.

Goal D: Monitor and Ensure Accountability

The NWS senior-level management is primarily responsible for ensuring and emphasizing efforts to achieve a fully diverse workforce, inclusive of African-Americans. OEODM, through existing tracking and reporting mechanisms, will assist the NWS Assistant Administrator, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Region Directors, Headquarters Directors, Staff Officers, managers and supervisors in accomplishing workforce diversity by implementing and monitoring workforce profiles and measures. The NWS will use the following action items to promote accountability and results with respect to African-American employment.

1. Periodically update and review organizational African-American workforce goals and achievements.

Lead Office: OEODM

Completion: Review goals and accomplishments semiannually.

2. Submit Annual Status Reports to the OEODM Director on NWS progress towards improving the promotion potential of African-Americans.

Lead Office: OEODM

Completion: Annually